

2 Samuel 18:19-33 - Thursday, July 2nd, 2015

- Absalom has been killed along with 20,000 men in Israel's army after they had launched their attack against David and his men.
- This after David had given his clear command to not harm his son Absalom but rather to show him kindness and mercy instead.
- As we pick it up in here verse 19 David is about to receive the news of his son Absalom's death and in effect his victory as well.

19 Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Let me run now and take the news to the king, how the LORD has avenged him of his enemies." 20 And Joab said to him, "You shall not take the news this day, for you shall take the news another day. But today you shall take no news, because the king's son is dead."

- It may seem odd at first read that Joab doesn't allow Ahimaaz to take the news to David, however, there's a good reason for it.
- Namely, that of Ahimaaz wanting to be the one to bring David only good news of his victory and not the bad news of his son.
- In other words, Ahimaaz is unwilling to be the bearer of bad news, which is why Joab, to his credit won't allow him to do this.

- You probably already know where this is all headed, so suffice it to say that the lesson here becomes quite clear related to this.
- More specifically, we're all prone to be like Ahimaaz and bring only the good news of the Lord avenging our enemy in victory.
- However, we don't want to bring the bad news of the Son of God's death on the cross in order to pay for the sins of all mankind.

- I would venture to say that we have way too many Ahimaaz's in the body of Christ, and behind the pulpit of our churches today.
- By that I mean, there's only the positive message packaged with the good news of Jesus Christ, but there's no bad news with it.
- The problem with this is that it's the bad news of the wages of sin being death that makes the news good of Christ paying for it.

21 Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." So the Cushite bowed himself to Joab and ran. 22 And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said again to Joab, "But whatever happens, please let me also run after the Cushite." So Joab said, "Why will you run, my son, since you have no news ready?" 23 "But whatever happens," he said, "let me run." So he said to him, "Run." Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain, and outran the Cushite.

- To me, this speaks of the one with the good news of victory being more excited to get the word out than the one with bad news.
- You'll forgive me for reading too much into this, but I believe it also speaks to the issue of having only zeal without knowledge.
- Perhaps better said, they have a zeal for the Lord, but they don't have the spiritual maturity in the Lord, which is Romans 10:2.

Romans 10:2 (NIV) — 2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge.

24 Now David was sitting between the two gates. And the watchman went up to the roof over the gate, to the wall, lifted his eyes and looked, and there was a man, running alone. 25 Then the watchman cried out and told the king. And the king said, "If he is alone, there is news in his mouth." And he came rapidly and drew near. 26 Then the watchman saw another man running, and the watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "There is another man, running alone!" And the king said, "He also brings news." 27 So the watchman said, "I think the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." And the king said, "He is a good man, and comes with good news."

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that the first to bring the good news may not be the best.
- By that I mean, they may be the first and the fastest maybe even the biggest but that doesn't necessarily mean they're the best.
- Be that as it may, for David to see only one man coming would have been perceived as good news anyway by way of victory.

Charles Spurgeon of this wrote, "If there were many men running they would probably be fugitives from the fight, but one would naturally be a herald from the camp."

28 So Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, "All is well!" Then he bowed down with his face to the earth before the king, and said, "Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my lord the king!"

- This is textbook when it comes to those who only tell half the story as it relates to the good news. They only say, "All is well!"
- I find it interesting that we're told after he bowed down with his face before the king, he says, "Blessed be the Lord your God."
- In other words, he's saying what too many say today, which is, "all is well," it's all good ...be blessed because the Lord is good."

29 The king said, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant and me your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I did not know what it was about."

- What Ahimaaz says here is textbook, such that he's being vague in answering David's question concerning his son Absalom.
- Conversely, what David asks here is more textbook in the sense that it's a question every one of us should also be asking.
- Namely, you're not telling me the truth, what's the whole story-tell me the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God.

30 And the king said, "Turn aside and stand here." So he turned aside and stood still. 31 Just then the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, "There is good news, my lord the king! For the LORD has avenged you this day of all those who rose against you."

- It's interesting that the Cushite basically says the same exact thing to David as Ahimaaz did. Nobody wants to tell him the truth.
- Again, to me, this speaks of our reluctance to tell the truth of the gospel by including both the good news and the bad news too.
- However, to the Cushite's credit, he will speak the truth to David concerning Absalom, which is what we see in the next verse.

Charles Spurgeon - "The honest Ethiopian told his black news as fairly as he could, but a dagger went to the father's heart as he heard it."

32 And the king said to the Cushite, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" So the Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise against you to do harm, be like that young man!" 33 Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: "O my son Absalom—my son, my son Absalom—if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!"

- Here again, we have another one of those passages that are amongst the saddest in all the Bible, as David grieves for his son.
- While we did talk about this last week, it's probably worth repeating how that David believes that Absalom is lost for all eternity.
- This because, there's no mention of David saying he would go to Absalom like he did when the son born to Bathsheba died.

- Notice that David says repeatedly, my son, my son, a total of five times. I point this out for a couple of very important reasons.
- First, David knew that the sword would never depart from his house because of what he did in committing adultery and murder.
- In other words, while he knew that this was coming, rather than lessening the grief, it seems to have done the exact opposite.

G. Campbell Morgan - "Everything in the story leads up to, and culminates in, this wail of anguish over his dead boy ... Five times he repeated the words, 'my son.' "

- It's interesting to note verse thirty-three where we're told that David was deeply moved. It means that he was utterly devastated.
- This is the second reason it's important to understand David repeatedly saying, my son, my son Absalom, a total of five times.
- Here's what I'm thinking, he knew very well the proverbial apple doesn't fall too far from the tree, related to him being his son.

- I can't help but wonder how much David's overwhelming grief must have come as a result of his being responsible as a parent.
- That's not to say that the son pays for the sins of the father, but it is to say that as father's we have the parental responsibility.
- Perhaps better said, the parent isn't responsible for the sins of the son, however, they are indeed responsible for their own sins.

G. Campbell Morgan said it best this way, "We cannot stand in the presence of that suffering without learning the solemn lessons of parental responsibility it has to teach, not merely in training our children, but in that earlier training of ourselves for their sakes. ... "This surely had a deeper note in it than that of the merely half-conscious repetition of words occasioned by personal grief. The father recognized how much he was responsible for the son. It is as though he had said: He is indeed my son, his weaknesses are my weaknesses, his passions are my passions, his sins are my sins."

- Before we bring the Bible study to an end, there's one last thing that I would like to point out, and it has to do with David's love.
- More specifically, David's love for his son Absalom, in spite of the fact he was so rebellious that he wanted to actually kill him.
- It's virtually impossible for a son or daughter to understand the love of a parent unless and until they have children of their own.

Charles Spurgeon - "He might have said, 'Is the young man Absalom dead? For if he is out of the way there will be peace to my realm, and rest to my troubled life.' But no, he is a father, and he must love his own offspring. It is a father that speaks, and a father's love can survive the enmity of a son." ... "Our children may plunge into the worst of sins, but they are our children still. They may scoff at our God; they may tear our heart to pieces with their wickedness; we cannot take complacency in them, but at the same time we cannot unchild them, nor erase their image from our hearts."